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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 077798

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/18/2018
TAGS: [KPKO](#) [PREL](#) [RW](#) [SU](#) [UNSC](#)
SUBJECT: USUN DEMARCHE FOR KK UNAMID SUPPORT

Classified By: IO Acting A/S Brian H. Hook, E.O. 12958,
Reasons: 1.4(b) and (d)

1. (C) This is an action request for USUN (para 4).

2. (C) In several recent meetings with the State Department, the most senior GOR leaders have delivered the message that Rwanda will pull out of Darfur if Rwandan UNAMID Deputy Force Commander General Karenzi Karake is removed. Most notably, it was confirmed in meetings between President Kagame and A/S Frazer at the AU Summit as well as on July 15 in a meeting with A/S Frazer and Foreign Minister Museminali. The FORMIN also noted that President Kagame has sent a letter to the UNSYG on this case. A/S Frazer asked for a copy. In both of these meetings, as well as numerous others, the Rwandans confirmed that they will not only pull out of Darfur, but opt out of serving in future UN peacekeeping operations.

3. (C) Minister Museminali informed the U.S. in the July 15 meeting that General Karake has been told that he will have to submit to an interview to compete for his position on July 23, along with several new candidates. Museminali labeled this as blatant discrimination, when compared with the treatment of Nigerian UNAMID Force Commander Agwai who was renewed without an interview process.

4. (C) Action request USUN: In view of the serious situation in Sudan/Darfur and the critical importance of efforts to strengthen UNAMID in the face of continuing obstacles and threats, USUN is instructed to inform UN officials, especially DPKO U/S Jean-Marie Guehenno and UNSYG Ban Ki Moon, that the USG urges the renewal of Karake's contract, without discrimination. Please see below talking points to draw from.

5. (C) Begin Points:

-- The United States Government is deeply concerned about developments in Sudan/Darfur, and strongly committed to supporting the strengthening of UNAMID. We would be seriously concerned about any action that might create additional obstacles to efforts to enhance UNAMID, or jeopardize steps already taken. A decision not to reappoint Rwandan General Karenzi Karake may have such an effect.

-- The Rwandans, by all accounts, are the most effective fighting force in Darfur and play a critical part in our joint efforts in that region. General Karake has shown that he is an active, experienced, and capable officer in an environment demanding such qualities.

-- The GOR has delivered a strong message to the U.S. Government and, we have been told, to the UN that Rwanda will pull all of its troops out of Darfur if Karake is removed. (NOTE: We understand that this was conveyed to UNSYG Ban Ki Moon through a letter from Rwandan President Paul Kagame. The Department has not seen a copy of this letter. END NOTE.) The GOR at the most senior levels has also told us that Rwanda would decline future participation in peace keeping missions.

-- Bringing peace to Darfur is a top priority for the international community and the UN. Losing the four Rwandan

Battalions that are there, a total of 2500 soldiers, would be detrimental to the peacekeeping operation and fellow peacekeepers, leaving the population at great risk.

-- We have explored with the senior levels of the GOR a face-saving approach to the General Karake situation, which might include his voluntary retirement after his contract was renewed. The GOR has strongly rejected even considering this possibility.

-- In view of the compelling need to ensure UNAMID's viability and chances for success, the United States recommends that Karake's contract be renewed.

-- We are aware of a number of serious accusations alleging Karake's involvement (as well as that of virtually the entire hierarchy of the Rwandan military) in or connection to crimes committed in Rwanda and DRC between 1994 and 2000. Our own review of the information available to us prior to Karake's initial appointment did not produce any information that would have warranted urging his rejection.

16. (C) Background:

An independent magistrate in Spain issued an indictment of Rwanda's top military and political leaders in January, including General Karenzi Karake. The Spanish Indictment is affecting Rwanda's contribution to UNAMID, as GOR has threatened to pull out if Rwandan Deputy Force Commander, named in the indictment, is removed from his position. Over the past month, the USG has encouraged the GOR to engage with the GOS and distinguish their position from the court's account of the genocide, which raises basic questions of the judge's understanding of the true course of events. The indictment has created bilateral and multilateral difficulties for the GOR, and specifically the top military and political leadership of Rwanda. The GOR has publicly castigated the West for its paralysis on these issues.

The Rwandans have four battalions in Darfur and are preparing to upgrade each battalion to full UN strength with over \$20 million in USG equipment and training support. Evidently because of UN concerns over the Spanish indictment, his position has been advertised for competition by the UN, while the Nigerian Force Commander position has not.

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